(c) Recruitment to fill up vacancies is a continuous process and it is done from time to time.

Irregularities and malfunctioning in pantry cars of trains

†1898. SHRI MAHENDRA SAHNI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that gross irregularities and malfunctioning in the pantry car of Rajdhani/Superfast Express trains and Vaishali Superfast Express trains run by Indian Railways have been noticed;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to bring in qualitative improvements in the said Superfast Express trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No gross irregularity and malfunctioning in the pantry car of Rajdhani/Superfast Express trains including Vaishali Superfast Express train have been noticed. However, there were three complaints each for Patna Rajdhani Express and Vaishali Express trains for 2005-06 and four and five complaints respectively for Patna Rajdhani Express and Vaishali Express trains for 2006-07. Actions like, fine in four cases, warning in five cases and counseling in four cases have been taken. Similar actions have been taken in the deficiencies noticed during inspections.

(c) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) and zonal railways conduct inspections and surprise checks at stations and on trains with a view to ensure that good quality food is supplied on trains and at stations through railway catering services. Appropriate action is taken on the complaints received.

Rail projects

1899. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA:
SHRI T.S. BAJWA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of railway projects have been inordinately delayed, thereby causing escalation of costs of the projects;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the number of the projects not completed as on 31st March, 2006, started (i) over twenty years ago, (ii) over ten years ago and (iii) over five years ago;

(c) the extent of cost escalation under each of the above categories;

(d) what specific steps are proposed to be taken to expedite the completion of these projects; and

(e) at what level the monitoring of these projects is done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Heavy throwforward of projects with limited availability of funds have affected the timely completion of projects. During the intervening period from the sanctioned of the project to its completion, there has been escalation due to increase in cost of labour, material, fuel, etc.

(b) As on 31.3.2006, there were five projects taken up more than 20 years back, 34 projects taken up between 10-20 years back and 113 projects taken up between 5-10 years back.

(c) Time and cost overrun is feasible to be assessed only when full funds are assured at the time of taking up of the projects.In case of Railway Project, funding is not assured at the time of taking up of the project and is decided on year to year basis based on overall availability of resources. Hence cost overrun is not feasible to be assessed.

(d) A number of initiatives have been taken to augment resources for expeditious completion of the ongoing project, apart from internal generation of resoures. These include sharing by State Governments, Public/Private Partnership, funding from Ministry of Defence, additional resources for National Projects and non-budgetary initiatives through Rail Vikas Nigam Limited.

(e) Regular monitoring of projects is done at field level, zonal level and at Railway Board level.

Survey for rail lines in Uttaranchal

†1900. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.